

The Blue Beret

November 2006

**Last Mine
Detonated
in Nicosia**



THE BLUE BERET

Published monthly by the:

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A lesson for us all

The recent attack by a gang of Greek Cypriot youths from neighbouring schools on a group of Turkish Cypriot pupils at Nicosia's prestigious English school triggered alarm bells and revulsion across the island. The fact that the assault may have been caused in part by contentious and ill informed reporting (mis-reporting, according to some) of an earlier scuffle at the school between two 12-year-old pupils, one Greek Cypriot, the other Turkish Cypriot, only served to underscore rising concerns about growing distrust between the two communities.

Similar concerns are raised in the SG's message for the International Day of Tolerance (16 November). He notes how individuals and entire communities are being targeted because of their ethnic, religious, national or other identity in a world of growing intolerance, extremism and violence.

Stressing the need to uphold the principles of tolerance, pluralism, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence, the SG says everyone should be ready to speak up for victims of discrimination at all times. Combating intolerance is in part a matter of legal protection, he adds, but the law is only a starting point.

"Any strategy to build understanding must depend heavily on education – about different religions, traditions and cultures – so that myths and distortions can be seen for what they are. We must also create opportunities for young people, offering them a credible alternative to the siren song of hate and extremism. And we must work to prevent the media from being used to spread hatred, or inflict humiliation, while safe-guarding freedom of expression."

All of this points up the crucial need for leadership by public figures and institutions. However, public initiative must be matched by individual effort. Diversity – in thought, in belief, and in action – is a precious gift, not a threat, says Kofi Annan. It is his wish that we all join together to seek to build more tolerant communities steeped in this essential ideal.

EU and UN combine to mark mine-free Nicosia

Nicosia became mine-free on 22 November when the last two remaining landmines in the buffer zone area near the city were detonated at a special ceremony presided over by Andrew Rasbash, Head of Unit, DG Enlargement, and SRS Michael Møller. Also present were members of the diplomatic corps, political and municipal leadership and EC, UNDP-PFF, CMP, and UN agency officials in Cyprus. Representing UNFICYP were the Force Commander, the Chief of Staff and the Senior Adviser. UN Mine Action Centre project manager Mick Raine hosted the event and briefed attending media.

UNFICYP Chief of Mission Møller praised the EU's support of the joint EU-UN effort, which began in November 2004 and which to date has resulted in the removal of 2,810 mines in 25 minefields and clearance of 1.8 million square metres of buffer zone land with an estimated nine million square metres to be cleared.

Undoubtedly, it was a landmark landmine occasion, the Chief of Mission said, closing a significant chapter in the history of a very special cooperative venture. Hopefully, it would also serve as prelude to an equally successful and satisfactory follow-on phase resulting in a mine-free buffer zone and, eventually, a mine-free Cyprus.

Mr. Møller noted that the EU is the demining programme's principal donor, having given 5 million euros to support activities thus far and now, as he had been assured, there was more funding in the pipeline.

Both the Republic of Cyprus and Turkey are signatories to the 1997 Ottawa Convention banning anti-personnel landmines, which testifies to the fact that landmines have no place in any civilized society. One look at the buffer zone and it was evident how landmines can remain a major obstacle to rebuilding and renewal in post-conflict societies. One dormant landmine can hold an entire community hostage just through fear of its presence.

Landmine removal and disposal is a painstaking and hazardous business involving precision, patience and, above all, expertise. In the case of the buffer zone, every mine removed represents one less obstacle. Every mine destroyed represents one step forward. Such progress enables the two communities to move about more freely and means new opportunities for trade and commerce.

The SRS hoped that by detonating the last mines in the Nicosia area, he and Mr. Rasbash would help instill an even stronger commitment on the part of both communities to make Cyprus mine-free. Certainly, the mix of EU and other donor funding plus UNFICYP support and UN Mine Action expertise was helping ensure steady progress in ridding buffer zone and island of landmines once and for all.



Talat meets the SG

After meeting with the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr. Mehmet Ali Talat, in Geneva on 20 November, the Secretary-General told a joint press encounter at the Palais des Nations that their discussion had been very constructive.

"We went over the status of the progress on the talks. We discussed the measures that both parties are to take with my representative, Michael Møller, on the island, to ensure that the parties prepare effectively, not only as confidence building measures but also as a step towards full resumption of negotiations aimed at settling the Cyprus issue.

"I have urged that both parties work very closely with my representative on the island and that what is important is not declaration of intent, but I would want to see action from both sides that narrows the gap between words and action and that indicates to me and my successor, that the parties are ready to resume and move ahead in earnest."

The SG said he believed that everyone was agreed that a divided Cyprus is a problem, not just for the island, but also for the EU and the wider world. Steps had to be taken to resolve this issue. In the meantime, he believed Turkish Cypriots in the north had to be assisted in their development aspirations.

He had indicated as much to the Security Council in his report following the failure of the referendum when he said that the north's isolation should be lifted because doing so and promoting development of the north would make future



unification easier, given that it would narrow the gap between the two sides.

In what was their last meeting, the Secretary-General said it had been a great pleasure working with Mr. Talat over all these years.

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Front Cover: Last mine detonated in Nicosia

Back Cover: Old Comrades not forgotten



Available at the PIO

UNFICYP Seasons Greetings cards 2006

DPKO Gender Adviser updates staff on progress

On 13 November, the Head of the UN Gender Advisory Team of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Ms. Comfort Lamptey, arrived at HQ UNFICYP to brief UNFICYP staff on progress so far on implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security.

Addressing a Town Hall Meeting, Ms. Lamptey outlined Resolution 1325, adopted in October 2000, which provides an important mandate for addressing gender issues including the requested incorporation of a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations. The resolution also urged the SG to ensure that field operations include a gender component, as appropriate.

This resolution is very significant because it recognises for the first time the issue of women in conflict and not just that of victims. It also looks at women as agents for change. With this mandate in mind, DPKO ensured the establishment of gender components in all of its multi-dimensional missions established since 2000.

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The gender units serve to assist the mission leadership and different mission components (e.g. Human Rights, Civil Affairs, Political Affairs, etc.) to address the specific concerns of women in their respective areas of work.

Gender units also actively engage with women in these post-conflict countries and make sure that their input informs mission policies and decisions.

However, whilst gender components have been established in multi-dimensional missions, it is a fact that not much has been done so far in terms of implementing SRC 1325 in traditional – or long-established – missions like UNFICYP. The reason often given is that the mandate is limited and, therefore, there is little scope.

Gender Focal Points have been identified by mission leadership in all of the traditional missions. Generally, these have been ad hoc arrangements, which have not been guided by clear terms of reference for the Focal Points. In addition, they have not underlined the skills, capacities and expertise required to ensure that Focal Points effectively facilitate gender-sensitive approaches to peacekeeping activities in their respective missions.

Also noteworthy is the fact that Focal Points are called upon to assume this role in addition to their full-time work responsibilities. This limits their ability to provide dedicated attention to supporting the resolution. In effect, existing opportunities to facilitate implementation of SCR 1325 in traditional missions have yet to be sufficiently analyzed and remain untapped to date. In the absence of a policy position and clear guidance to facilitate implementation of SCR 1325 in traditional missions, the existing arrangements will continue to have limited impact.

Increasingly, some member states have been asking exactly what is being done by these gender components in other missions and what is being reported to the SC in regard to SCR 1325. Hence the decision to review these “traditional” missions to see where the new process starts.

With this in mind, Ms. Lamptey’s visit included checking what more can be done, including allocation of the financial resources required to enable missions like UNFICYP to look at gender issues in a more serious way.

Ms. Lamptey also spoke of what is being done in other mission areas with a view to discerning what might have greatest relevance to UNFICYP and Cyprus.

In DPKO, much of the work in support of implementation of Resolution 1325 focuses on three key objectives.

One relates to how DPKO supports increasing women’s participation in transitional peace processes – how women are engaged, whether in the political process or in DDR (Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration).

The second concerns how policies, training tools and operational guidelines are developed – how to support different mission components to address gender issues in their work.

The third aspect focuses on increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping. At present, there are no female SRSGs. All SRSGs are men, which, of course, puts a lot of pressure on women. Women are being encouraged to apply for posts at all levels, particularly senior civilian positions.

The senior management team has adopted an action plan which looks at how the three objectives can be advanced in the coming years. This covers all DPKO offices – the office of operations, the office of mission support, the military, the police, mine action and the office of the USG. Each has clearly outlined and endorsed a range of activities to support work at the policy level. What is now required is to ensure that missions also have similar plans of action in place to guide the implementation of SCR 1325.



Comfort Lamptey at the Town Hall Meeting

There is also a drive to strengthen female numbers among uniformed peacekeepers. Global statistics show that 2% of military personnel are women, whilst the police show 4%.

This represents a major task which also changes the profile of peacekeeping by recognising the benefits of having women interact more with the local populations. To address this gender gap, there is a need to undertake a review of missions in order to determine optimal staffing arrangements and other necessary support.

There is a long way to go in getting staff who work in peacekeeping to understand the importance of addressing gender issues. This is an agenda that will make our work in peacekeeping more effective.

It is not simply a question of numbers. It’s not about adding one or two more women. It’s really about changing the whole institutional culture and making sure that people understand and accept that women have a responsibility as UN personnel to be in the peace process. It’s a question of rights, but it’s also a question of efficiency, because when about half the population is omitted, the peace that is built is shaky at best.

With the setting up of the Senior Mission Recruitment Section at HQ, the question of recruitment of women to senior mission positions will now get more serious consideration.

One or two of the Security Council members actually approached DPKO recently to say that: “We need to see greater accountability to the senior managers in peacekeeping missions in terms of how they champion this particular mandate. We need to make sure that it’s translated so that the move from lip service to actually seeing that a lot of the investments we are making in peacekeeping can really be sustained if we build along all the resources available in the countries.”

Annual Meeting of the DPKO Gender Advisory Team

The Gender Advisory Team of DPKO held its annual meeting in Geneva Switzerland from 6 to 9 November. The group consisted of Gender Advisers and Focal Points from all peacekeeping missions (UNFICYP was represented by Sally-Anne Corcoran) and a team from UN HQ in New York, headed by Comfort Lamptey, DPKO’s Gender Adviser.

The main aim of the gathering was to discuss and set the team’s

strategic priorities over the next year from the practical, programmatic and policy perspectives. Highlights included the year in review, where each team member offered a snapshot of gender issues both within the internal peacekeeping mission and external country context within which she was operating. Snapshots included progress, problematic areas and suggestions for the way forward. Other areas emphasized were the documenting of

good practices, women’s role in peace-making (SCR 1325 on women, peace and security) and the review of the implementation of Resolution 1325 in traditional missions, such as UNFICYP.

At the meeting’s conclusion, the Head of the Advisory Team travelled to Cyprus as part of the review of gender policy in traditional missions. The goal of her visit to UNFICYP was to inform DPKO policy on gender in traditional missions.



What UNFICYP is doing to implement Resolution 1325

The goal of advancing gender equality in all areas of Mission operations is specifically mandated by Resolution 1325. This goal is one that has been and continues to be pursued by UNFICYP. Since 2004, UNFICYP contributed to that goal through:

- The Establishment of Mission Framework and Training on Gender. Our overall Mission plan on training in the SEA and Gender areas for all categories of staff, including military and police contingents, was submitted and initiated in 2005. UNFICYP also completed the training of all staff in this area by the end of 2005. Gender and SEA were added to the induction forms for all categories of new staff, who now receive an initial awareness/ induction training in those subjects upon arrival at UNFICYP.
- The Creation of UN Country Team Gender Group, chaired by Focal Point Sally-Anne Corcoran. Includes police and military training components of UNFICYP in order to have an integrated mission strategy. The group meets to discuss gender in the Cyprus country-context and collaboration vis-a-vis training and other gender-related issues encountered on the ground.
- Formation of a High-Level Policy Group – the expansion of UNFICYP’s initial bi-communal women’s panel group from our 2004 International Women’s Day event – into a “Cypriot Gender Group”, chaired by the Focal Point, consisting of three high-level women from each of the sides and a representative group of Greek Cypriot and

Turkish Cypriot administration and NGO bodies. Since its creation, the group has met to discuss and tackle gender problems relating to women in Cyprus, such as the issue of trafficking. It is significant, not only in the gender context, but also in the political one, as this “bridge-building” exercise has led to positive interaction between the sides at a high level and continues to hold promise for future cooperation

- Issuance of the Chief of Mission’s circular to all staff on the subjects of trafficking and “off-limits premises”, 29 July 2005 via the CAO (still in force).
- Issuance of the Force Commander’s Directive on the subject of SEA and Trafficking on 8 March 2005 (still in force).
- Establishment of a Bi-communal Anti-trafficking Group in 2006, consisting of the UN Country Team, embassy and Turkish and Greek Cypriot administrative partners. The largest bi-communal group on the island, it has met since its establishment following the UNFICYP International Women’s Day event on the subject of trafficking.

UNFICYP continues to facilitate anti-trafficking initiatives in conjunction with the US Embassy and UNDP. One goal is to bring in UN system technical expertise, such as the UN Office for Drugs and Crime’s anti-trafficking division to assist with the national anti-trafficking action plan. UNFICYP’s efforts in this area dovetail with those of UNDP and the US Embassy.

The economic case for a united Cyprus

The island's apparent lack of interest in the economic side of reunification is "an important missing element in the often stale and clichéd discourse on the Cyprus problem", SRSB Møller said in late November, pondering why the economic argument for a united Cyprus "is so poorly articulated and so rarely heard in political discourse." He was opening a PRIO conference in Nicosia on "Economic Perspectives in Cyprus: the Path towards Reunification".

The UNFICYP Chief of Mission pointed out that strategies designed to block economic development were "out of date" and "out of sync" with modern European politics and economic practice. The more divergent the island's two economies become, the harder it would be to find a solution, he warned.

There were many good reasons to inject an economic perspective into any discourse on the Cyprus problem, none less complicated than the simple relevance of the economy to the citizens of both communities, especially the growing numbers more focused on business activities than on politics or a solution. Furthermore, it was time the economic case was forcefully and coherently argued by and on behalf of those who seek to enjoy fulfilled lives within a united Cyprus.

Mr. Møller recalled how in the mid-1980s, an expanding European Community, with the potential to become a single market serving more than 300 million consumers, had to overcome obstacles ranging from queues at border crossings and technical barriers to trade to closed markets for public contracts in order to arrive at a single market.

Businesses, professions and trade unions all thrived as they adapted to the new rules of the game. Everyone reaped the benefits, as a wider range of goods and services became available and people were able to move around freely in Europe to the point where today, everybody wants to join the club.

The same issues, questions and doubts experienced in the mid-80s, apply to the Cyprus of today where the bottom line question concerns the economic cost of a non-solution.

En route to the single European market model, nations had to overcome mistrust and misgivings that others might benefit at their expense. In fact, the opposite proved true. The mutual benefit approach served to help build trust and facilitated an ability to compromise on matters of great importance.

The lesson should be clear for all to see, SRSB Møller concluded, especially with regard to Cyprus.

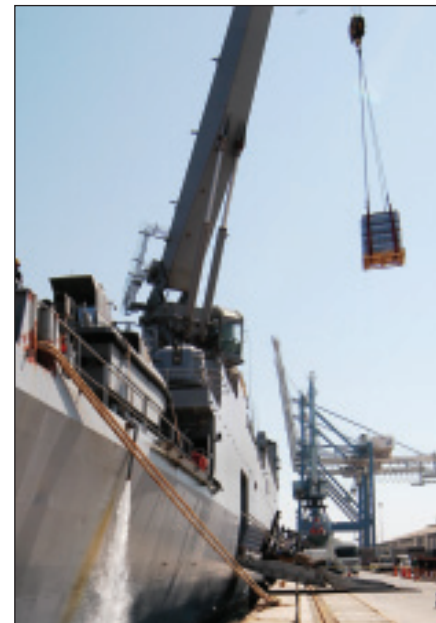
He pointed out how days earlier, in Geneva, the SG had noted that promoting development of the north, would make future unification easier insofar as "the gap between the two sides will not be as wide as it would otherwise be." The SG said he hoped "that efforts will be made to assist them and to help with their developmental aspirations."

SRSB Møller cited a World Bank study that shows the Turkish Cypriot economy grew by over 10% from 2002 to 2004 against 2.6% growth in the south. Hopefully, the EU package of 259 million euros focusing on structural reform and knowledge transfer would yield long-term benefits. He was convinced of the potential for

growth in the order of billions over years in a united Cyprus to the benefit of all citizens.

Saying the UN was proud to have PRIO as its partner, the Chief of Mission thanked the Norwegian NGO for its substantive support and input to the search for a good solution to the Cyprus problem.

Mr. Møller urged the business communities to reach out to as many stakeholders as possible. He called on conference participants to develop a clear and easily understood economic case for a united Cyprus, one that would grab the imagination of individual Cypriots and thus become an important element in the mainstream of Cypriot political discourse, thereby helping chart the path for a better future.



SG on Elimination of Violence Against Women

Violence against women causes untold misery, harms families across generations, and impoverishes communities, the SG said in his worldwide message issued 29 November. It stops women from fulfilling their potential, restricts economic growth, and undermines development. When it comes to violence against women, there are no civilized societies, he said.

An in-depth study issued in October showed that half of humankind lives under this threat – in every continent, country and culture, regardless of income, class, race or ethnicity. This is so, despite living in a world that recognizes and guarantees human rights as essential to the well being of the individual, the community and the world, and even though at the 2005 World Summit, leaders pledged to redouble efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women.

"Fighting this scourge requires us to change a mindset which is still too common and deep-seated. To demonstrate, once and for all, that when it comes to violence against women, there are no grounds for tolerance and no tolerable excuses."

Women's organisations and movements round the world have worked tirelessly over the years to take

violence against women out of the private domain and into the public sphere – into the arena of State accountability. Many States have enacted and implemented effective laws, and provided comprehensive and gender-sensitive services to victims. And there has also been progress in creating international standards.

"It is time to take these efforts to the next level. We in the United Nations must play a stronger, better coordinated and more visible leadership role. Member States must do more to implement the international legal and policy framework to which they have committed themselves. And all of us must form strong and effective partnerships with civil society, which has such a crucial role to play on this issue at every level.

"Together, we must work for an environment where violence against women is not tolerated. By mandating me to undertake the in-depth study, UN Member States have signalled that they are ready to do that. Now, with the study and its recommendations in hand, we must summon the necessary political commitment and resources. On this International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, let all of us – men and women alike – join forces in this mission."

Buffer Zone Environs – Haven and Hazard

The buffer zone is both haven and a hazard, SRSB Michael Møller said on 27 November, opening an UNDP-ACT/USAID environmental awareness poster campaign about the unique asset the buffer zone represents to the island. He also noted the "crucial role" civil society has to play in relation to environmental awareness in Cyprus and elsewhere and how important it is to be able to hand the buffer zone on as a pristine symbol to enhance a Cyprus settlement.

Joining U.S. Ambassador Ronald Schlicher to unveil the poster display in Ledra Palace crossing area, Mr. Møller said the buffer zone should be protected and preserved as a sanctuary for emblematic island wildlife, such as the moufflon, or flowers like the endemic brown tulip.

He noted, however, that the buffer zone can also be a hazard and not just because of minefields. A number of potential island-wide environmental health issues need to be coordinated, the SRSB said, citing the urgent need for an integrated, bicomunal response.

At a time of year when migratory bird patterns again expose us to the risk of an avian influenza outbreak, the island's public health professionals remain constrained to respond effectively and collectively. They know buffer zone boundaries have no meaning for these birds and that they cannot serve as a deterrent against the virus and its potential lethal impact. The fact is that the only effective way to keep a pandemic at bay requires the health professions "to coordinate their response with each other and with us, if the entire island's welfare and wellbeing is to be properly served."

Just as the buffer zone cannot deter birds from flying across it, it cannot prevent pollution from affecting the entire island. Because much of it is uninhabited, it also



offers a default haven for pests such as mosquitoes, rats, wild dogs, etc. At times, it can also be both tinderbox and channel for forest fires.

Environmental issues require global and regional solutions and in Cyprus, this definitely calls for island-wide coordination. The SRSB praised UNDP-ACT for helping to facilitate cooperation between veterinary and health experts from both communities.

At the same time, he observed that the island has its share of uncaring or unthinking individuals who abuse the buffer zone repeatedly by using it as a dumpsite for waste or rubbish. Also, hunters often stalk this nature haven in search of protected animals. The fact that few people live in the buffer zone now, does not mean the damage remains unseen, or that its impact is any less real, he warned.

The Chief of Mission hoped for the day when the buffer zone would be known as the "Green Line", not for "historical, conflict-related reasons", but because its very "greenness" would mark it "as a haven of biodiversity in an island that has suffered the scars of modern development."

"I would hope it becomes a line that one day will unite the island instead of keeping it divided. This is why it is so important that the prime responsibility for managing the common natural heritage of the island is vested in Cypriots themselves."

Everyone should recognise the key role played by environmental NGOs from all over the island in raising public environmental awareness, and for identifying potential problems, as well as proposing viable solutions, he said.

"My message to the people of Cyprus is simple: this is your island, and it is for you to decide the condition in which you wish to hand it over to your children."



Children from the two communities escort SRSB Møller and US Ambassador Schlicher at the exhibit

UNFICYP Military Skills Competition



Driving, not diving, test



Incident scenario confrontation



Endurance course



In the pipeline



Patrol and observation

On 23 November, UNFICYP held its traditional biannual military skills competition. This winter, there were some tough challenges, particularly from the sector teams determined to reverse MFR's winning record! It would be a close battle, and training by all teams was done as best they could, their operational and other commitments permitting.

The competition day started with a morale-sapping wake-up and dark-hours breakfast. Teams arrived at the control tent in the UNPA for the kit check and weigh-in, generally passing without errors.

As dawn broke, it was straight onto the logs. Teams prepared themselves mentally for the gruelling 5.5 kms ahead. Some buckled under the weight of the enormous two-metre-long logs carried on shoulders, others jogged along at a steady pace. However, all arrived at the finish, the last teams to the cheers of those already there.

Then followed a rotation of stands testing various skills. Teams marched back and forth across the UNPA, visit-

ing the ranges, driving area, a navigation test, patrol lanes and other tasks.

The last event was the obstacle course. Teams, physically and mentally exhausted after the previous stands, were vying for top spot. Where their energy came from is anybody's guess. Through the tunnels they went, over walls, in and out of mazes and bars... until they reached the penultimate obstacle, the 12-foot wall. Lighter team members were hurled over first, catching burdens and then helping their remaining team members to the other side.

As dusk drew in, all waited with great anticipation to hear Force Commander Maj.Gen. José Rafael Barni read out the results. It was an extremely close-fought contest with only a handful of points separating the first four places at the conclusion of the November 2006 Military Skills Competition. Sector 2's team came in third, MFR second and the overall winners were the Argentinian A team – well done Sector 1!

Lt. Tom Bell



Two Blue Helmets, sitting on a wall



Perfect form



Spot the bullet!



Mixed team – map reading



Sector 1 – The Winners!

Farewell Tony

After over four decades of service to the United Nations, the last 25 of which he served as the SRSG's driver, Tony Malas has finally handed in the keys for UN1. Tony is one of the longest serving employees, not only at UNFICYP but in the organisation as a whole.

In a symbolic switching of roles, Chief of Mission, Michael Møller, in a convoy of military and transport vehicles with lights flashing and sirens blaring, drove Tony and his wife Androulla to a farewell party at the International Mess on 24 November, where his colleagues toasted his record 42.5 years of service and wished him a happy retirement.

SRSG Møller presented Tony with a UN medal in recognition of more than 40 years of dedicated service to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus that was signed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, an honour not generally bestowed on civilians.

Tony started working for the Untied Nations on 18 May 1964 as a waiter in the Officers' Mess, with a salary of around seven pounds a week. He remained in the post of waiter for five years, before working as a cook for a year and then 11 years as a barman.



He joined Transport as a driver on 20 December 1978 and remained there for 27 years until his retirement. He started off with normal duties and also served as the CAO's driver. Occasionally he covered for colleagues on leave, acting as the SRSG's driver as well as driving visitors from New York. In 1980, he was officially appointed to the post of driver for the SRSG, a position in which he remained until his retirement.

Tony is the living history of the mission, having joined almost at its inception and experiencing first-hand its growth and development into what it has become today. He has also had personal association with an impressive 10 SRSGs in total (Reynaldo Galindo-Pohl, Hugo Gobbi, James Holger, Oscar Camilion, Joe Clark, Han Sung-Joo, Diego Cordovez, Dame Anne Hercus, Zbigniew Wlosowicz, Michael Møller). He has also driven countless VIPs visiting from New York as well as former SGs Kurt Waldheim and Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Tony says he had good relations with all the SRSGs he served and is still in touch with some, including James Holger and Zbigniew Wlosowicz.



Your car is here, sir!

Looking back on his career, Tony smiles and says, "I have seen places in Cyprus as a driver that I may otherwise not have gone to. With Oscar Camilion, he recalls he discovered all the monasteries of Cyprus as the former SRSG knew every church and monastery in the forests and mountains of the island.

"I am happy that I am leaving the UN in health after so many years of service. I served the UN loyally and I don't think any of my bosses have any complaints, I think they are all satisfied. But at the same time, I am saddened because I am leaving a big family that for over 40 years I was closely associated with. Not only civilian personnel but military and police officials as well."

His colleagues at the Transport unit describe him as a modest and discreet man, always with a smile and willing to help, never complaining of the hours he worked, which sometimes stretched to 20-hour days.

Cyril Hames, Transport Dispatcher, addressing Tony at the unit's farewell dinner said: "Tony, I know there are colleagues here that have known you for much longer than me and have their own fond memories, but for the 13 years I have worked alongside you, I have always seen you as one of the team; a very much liked person who is always smiling and joking. But you have always taken your work seriously. Even in the last two weeks when you were 'winding down' and signing out, you have been delivering water to far out OPs like 03 and 15 and joining the supply runs up to Rizokarpasso."

In parting ways with his colleagues international and national, Tony says wishes them all the best and encourages them to serve the UN loyally. "I always say the employer who gives me food to eat I must show my love and respect to," something he has done commendably.

Netha Kreouzos



Transport escort for "trainee" driver Møller, Tony and his wife

Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day occupies a special place in the nation's heart. It's a chance to acknowledge the debt we all owe to those who have given their lives in war. It's all the more special when our troops are deployed on war fighting operations, but the service held in the war Graves Commission in the heart of the buffer zone that divides Cyprus had added dimensions: it was overlooked by the two opposing forces in Cyprus, and it was a truly international acknowledgement of the sacrifice and cost of war.

Representatives of the United Nations and over 20 nations acknowledged the sacrifice of their nations, and all nations, in war. And who could ignore the irony of commemorating Remembrance Day between two opposing factions, held apart by the United Nations?

High Commissioner Peter Millett laid a wreath on behalf of the United Kingdom and Col. Peter Fraser-Hopewell for the United Nations. Further British representation came with wreaths laid for 39th Regiment Royal Artillery and the British Contingent of the UN Force in Cyprus. Indeed, there



was a decidedly British flavour to this international service. The Tryst was uttered in the rich Welsh accent of WO1 (RSM) Chris Kerr and the service in the gentle Scots burr of Padre Neil Allison.

As the sound of hymns and the plangent call of the Last Post drifted to the Greek and Turkish lines, it would be uplifting to think that they would promote recognition of the futility of war in all who heard them.

PW

Fireworks Night



The history surrounding the use of fireworks has its basis as one of the weapons of war. However, in more recent times, fireworks have been used to mark a holiday, such as to bring in the New Year or mark some special event.

The 5th of November traditionally marks the British custom of celebrating Guy Fawkes Night (the date on which Guy Fawkes and his co-conspirators were caught attempting to blow up the British Seat of Government – the Houses of Parliament). The event was always traditionally marked by the construction of a large bonfire, atop of which an effigy of Guy Fawkes was burnt.

Health and safety and environmental legislation and multi-culturalism have seen an increase in firework-related accidents, with local celebrations banned in favour of centrally organised, professionally-run events. The resultant safety gains may have been at the expense of some of the old community spirit, with the emphasis shifting from Guy Fawkes to what we now call Bonfire or Fireworks Night.

UNFICYP held its Fireworks Night on 3 November 2006 on the airfield in the UNPA. It proved to be a festival of food, fun and excitement and was attended by over 800 people. Each of the national contingents laid on a "watering hole" of culture and gastronomic delights enjoyed by all. A true sense of community pervaded the entire evening.

Mrs Marie Rosa Barni, wife of the Force Commander, started off the evening by lighting the bonfire. She and her escort, the PROM, Maj. Fred Reid, almost became part of the festivities, when the carefully laid path of flame to the huge bonfire blew back. Only some fast footwork, as they leapt aside, avoided an embarrassing accident.

The bonfire quickly ignited, bathing the whole area in the warm glow of firelight and the party really started swinging. The firework display, set to the accompaniment of classical music, was outstanding and attracted the customary oooohhs and aaaahhs as the sky was lit up with colour, shapes and sound. Next came the party, which ran through until 10.00 p.m. The bonfire itself was such a success that, despite the rain, it continued to burn for five days!

As Chairman of the Fireworks Night Committee, I would like to thank all the members of the Committee for their hard work in making the evening such a success. I would also like to extend my thanks to the national contingents who took the time and effort to decorate their "watering holes" and prepare a festival of food, as well as the hard-working ladies of the HIVE for the plethora of opportunities to win some fantastic prizes. Although not specifically designated a charitable event, over £300 was raised by the evening for charitable causes.

PW

Night of 100 Stars – UNPA Movie Screening

More than 100 film fans from the two communities joined members of the diplomatic corps and others in the UNPA on 24 November for a private film screening jointly sponsored by Australian High Commissioner Garth Hunt, Dutch Ambassador Jan Eric Van Den Berg and SRSO Michael Møller.

Adam Sebire's "Echoes Across the Divide" and Betsy Torenbos' "Hidden Trees", two films celebrating Cyprus and the indomitable spirit of its people, were shown at the UNDP-ACT veterinary conference hall.

Earlier in the month, "Echoes Across the Divide", Australian documentary filmmaker Sebire's account of "Long Distance Call", the rooftop music event marking United Nations Day 2005 in old Nicosia, was shown to an invited audience at UN Headquarters in New York.

The film recounts the coming together of musicians and singers, young and old, from both sides of the island to



rehearse and then help realize Dutch composer Merlijn Twaalfhoven's composition inspired by and for the divided city. Many regrouped to attend the UNPA screening.

"Hidden Trees", a work in progress by Dutch mixed media artist Betsy Torenbos, draws on life's treasury of memories as recalled in a series of recent interviews she conducted with older members of the island's many communities. Some of those interviewed were among the preview audience, including Mustafa Diana seen above with filmmaker Betsy Torenbos. "The ability of mankind to listen to each others stories is a measure for equality between people."



UNFICYP "Bike Ride"

UNFICYP staff and family members set out on a motorcycle tour of the island on 21-22 October. The tour, organised by staff of the Transport Unit and leader of the pack Jeremy Ashcroft, featured a bigger turnout than expected with 14 riders and passengers in total. All makes and models – from 125 cc to 1,150 cc – turned up for the first UNFICYP Bike Ride. For a few passengers, it was their first time on a motorcycle.

At 8.00 a.m. Saturday, the bikers met by the UNPA Transport Unit. Introductions were made, bikes were checked, spirits were high, and the weather was just perfect. A group photo was taken to capture the moment.

From Agios Dometios, through Morphou, the first stop on the tour was Cape Kormakitis. The scenic coastal road was taken towards Kyrenia to Bellapais where coffee and tea were served at the Tree of Idleness Restaurant. With sunset much earlier at this time of year, the bikers head down towards the Pergamos crossing, a fish and chips dinner (including mushy peas!) at CESSAC in Dhekelia, and finally the Mariandy Hotel in Larnaca for some much needed R & R. Paul Cartwright of the Transport Unit surprised us all with a video of the ride. Paul's Honda touring bike is equipped with video cameras, front and rear, in addition to the bells and whistles you may have heard around the UNPA! Stephen Goldsmith provided commentary during the video on safety and what to do and what not to do while riding.

Sunday's ride was dedicated to the Karpas via Strovilia. We first rode along the eastern coast and made our way to the northern coast. Along our journey, we passed the most picturesque

beaches. Our final stop in the north was The Oasis in Agios Pilon where we were welcomed by Mashala and his very large and loud German shepherd.

From there, we set off to conclude our exciting and fun-filled journey in the Troodos village of Spilia. Yes, we rode straight from the Karpas through Agios Dometios and finally Spilia. Eleni, Jeremy's wife, had been preparing a wonderful dinner for all of us in the Sama Restaurant. Those of us lacking warm clothes were really feeling the cold! The fireplace was lit. Home-made zivania was passed around. We ate our fill and talked and laughed about our journey around this beautiful island called Cyprus.

Until the next ride...

Jo Clough



Youth logos aim to capture camp spirit

Between July and September 2006, over 260 young Cypriots from across the island came together in six youth camps supported by UNDP's initiative Action for Cooperation and Trust (ACT). The aim was to encourage the creation of an environment for developing friendships between young Turkish Cypriots and young Greek Cypriots. The camps were a success. Nine out of 10 participants said that by the end of the camp, they had exchanged contacts with at least one person from the other community. Each camp kept its promise to give each young person a unique and unforgettable time. Camp participants aged from 12-to-35 had the chance to try new sports and learn about the environment, the arts, sciences, peace education, and cultural heritage.

Upon completion of the Youth Camps, the public had a chance to choose a symbol which best represents the spirit of multiculturalism in Cyprus. The opportunity came as six youth organisations displayed logos and slogans created by their members during a competition to promote the youth



Joint winners of logo and slogan competition: Gizem Bengüsu (16), Olgu Avaroğlu (15) and Çise Korkut (16)

camps programme supported by ACT. During the summer, children from across the island were asked to draw a logo and come up with a slogan that would best capture the spirit of the multicultural youth camps.

People were invited to choose the winning logo best representing the ACT Youth Camp Programme through open voting at the square next to the Saray Hotel between 25 and 27 October and at the top of Ledra Street from 28 to 30 October.

The Youth Camps Reunion, held on 4 November at the Chetinkaya Football Pitch in Nicosia, reunited over 150 young Cypriots from across the island to celebrate the successful completion of the 2006 Youth Camps Programme. An Award Ceremony was also held for the winners of the youth camps logo competition.



Restoration of Omeriye Baths

An official ceremony, marking the award of the 2005 Europa Nostra first prize for the Omeriye Baths restoration project, took place in Nicosia on 22 November 2006. Funded by the European Union and implemented by the UNDP/UNOPS Programme Partnership for the Future in collaboration with the Nicosia Master Plan, this project won first prize in the category "Conservation of Architectural Heritage".

The ceremony was held inside the restored Omeriye Baths in the presence of foreign dignitaries, the Mayor of Nicosia, and officials from the European Union and UNDP.



The prize was presented by Mr. Costas Carras, Vice-President of Europa Nostra. Speeches were also made by the Mayor of Nicosia, Mr. Michalakis Zampelas, Ms. Tiziana Zennaro, Programme Manager UNDP-PFF, Mr. Pierre Harzé, Deputy Director UNDP Brussels Office, Mr. Andrew Rasbash, Head of Unit, DG Enlargement, and Ms. Edmee Leventis, Ambassador of Cyprus to UNESCO. Ms. Agni Petridou, Head of the Nicosia Master Plan Project Team, made a short presentation on the project.

UNPOL Medal Parade



On 24 November, UNPOL held a medal parade for 30 UNPOL members who were presented with the UN Medal. Recipients were comprised from the 86th Australian Contingent, the 4th Indian Contingent and the 14th Irish Contingent.

The presentation was held at the International Mess at the UNPA. Among the guests were SRSG Michael Møller, members of Senior Management, as well as Ambassadors and High Commissioners of the contributing countries. The Assistant Commissioner Martin Donnellan of the "Garda Síochána" travelled from Ireland especially for the occasion. The ceremony was conducted by Deputy Senior Police Adviser Col Speedie, with speeches by the Senior Police Adviser (SPA) Carla van Maris and SRSG Michael Møller.

In her welcoming remarks, SPA Carla van Maris stated: "The task of the UN Police is often complicated, not so much in technical or operational terms, but rather in a way in which UNPOL officers find themselves trying to steer clear of the rocks, making steady progress still, but meanwhile avoiding collisions and damage. UNPOL officers often are the first point of contact for civilians in the buffer zone and as such they are the primary ambassadors of UNFICYP."

SRSG Møller referred to the wide range of tasks of UNPOL officers face, noting that, unlike home, they function without a supporting legislative framework. This, plus often conducting their day-to-day business in a language other than their mother tongue, added to the challenge of achieving the goals as set for UNPOL.

A reception was held after the main ceremony where UNPOL members happily mingled with family and friends who congratulated the proud medalists.



From the left: SSgt. Tony Shearer, SPA Carla van Maris and SSgt. Heath Davies

New Faces

Political Affairs Officer, Tim Alchin
Tim Alchin arrived in Cyprus in mid-September. He is working in the office of the SRSG, assisting on political matters relating to the Cyprus problem, particularly European Union affairs.

This is not the first time Tim has worked on the Cyprus problem. He was Political Officer in the Delegation of the European Commission here on the island from 2000 to 2001. Tim comes directly from the European Commission where he has been working on EU Enlargement issues, including Cyprus, since 2000.



November 2006 – The Blue Beret

After returning to Brussels, he worked on Justice and Home Affairs issues. He was responsible for the establishment and delivery of technical assistance programmes to the Judiciary and Law enforcement authorities of the Western Balkan administrations. Over the last year, he was Communications Officer responsible for developing and implementing a communication strategy, promoting technical assistance instruments in 37 countries.

Tim and his wife Miriam are expecting their first child around Christmas time. Hobbies, which he expects to look back on fondly, include swimming, football and reading.

Visitors to UNFICYP

UNFICYP extended the usual courtesies when the Chief of Mission and Force Commander greeted distinguished visitors in the course of the month.



Korean Ambassador H.E. Mr. Chung Hae Moon: 30 November



UNIFIL Maritime Task Force Commander, Rear Admiral Andreas Krause: 30 November



Ms. Nilda C. Garre, Minister of Defence, Argentina: 31 October



EU Parliamentary delegation: 24 November



From left: Ch.Insp. Ronald Swarter, Comd Col Speedie, Dutch Police Commander Chief Commissioner Oscar Dros and Sen. Sgt. Richard Severs: 17 November



Dutch business community in Cyprus: 8 November

Bidding Fond Farewells



Insp. Mladen Vrtarić joined UNFICYP in May 2005 and left in October. He was one of the first Croatian police officers to serve with UNPOL.

Mladen returned home after almost 18 months, during which he became one of the best-known personalities in UNFICYP in the course of his stint as Police Liaison Officer in Ops Branch.

Mladen was also an enthusiastic member of the UNPOL football team. Were he a Canadian Mountie, you could say he always "got his man"!



Roy and his wife Daphne have many reasons to look back fondly on their time in Cyprus, not least because of the birth of Sophie, a sister for their daughter Lily.

Congratulations to **Roy Joblin**, Chief Communications Officer, who, after two years of dominating the squash courts and sports discussions (rugby and cricket at least!) has moved onwards and upwards to UNDOF in Damascus as Chief CITS.

During his stint with UNFICYP, Roy and his team completely overhauled and upgraded the entire communications network, providing voice and data means down to OP level.



**Old Comrades
Not Forgotten**